



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3009409

Applicant Name: Sarah Ayers for David Weitzel

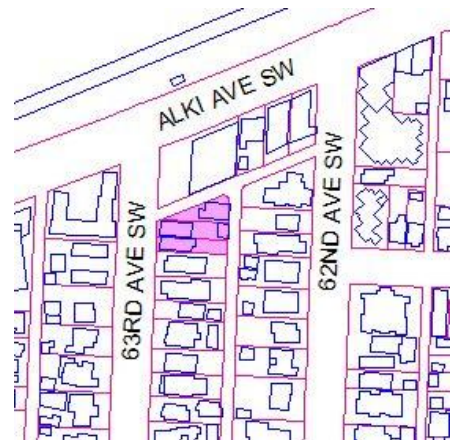
Address of Proposal: 3008 63rd Ave SW

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow seven (7) residential units, one, three-story building with six units and one, three-story building with one unit. Parking for seven vehicles is proposed in the structures. The existing structures are proposed to be demolished.

The following approvals are required:

Administrative Design Review - Chapter 23.41, (SMC) including departures from development standards: increased structure depth, side yard setback, facing façade setback, open space location and/or amount.



SEPA DETERMINATION: ☒ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

☐ DNS with conditions

☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & PROPOSAL:

The site, consisting of three (3) platted lots, is located on the east side of 63rd Avenue SW between Alki Avenue SW and SW Admiral Way. The site is zoned Lowrise 3 (L3). There are two alleys in this block; one running east-west and one running north-south. The proposal is for seven (7) townhouses with code required parking. Parking access is proposed to be via the alleys which run on two sides of the property. The applicant has applied for Administrative Design Review in order to receive departures from the development standards described in the land use code. Any departure requests will need to demonstrate how the proposed design better meets the early design guidance.

ARCHITECT'S PROPOSAL:

The applicant proposes to build seven (7) two to three story ground related townhouse style residential dwelling units split into two structures. Concept 1 is a design alternative with a central parking area access from the north alley. Parking would be provided in individual garages within the seven units. In this plan pedestrian access is pushed to the outside edge of the development and open space provided at the entry of each building and on roof top decks. Concept 2 is a design with central pedestrian access, private open space and shared common open space. Parking would be provided in individual garages within the dwelling units. In this scheme there are two buildings one on 63rd and one along the east alley. The common and central open space is a positive feature of this alternative concept. Concept 3 is an alternative that treats 63rd and the north alley both as street fronts. The housing units are located along the two rights of way. The plan has two buildings, one six-unit building and one single family unit. The buildings are oriented to maximize view, strengthen the connection to the street and to enhance the pedestrian experience on 63rd Avenue. There is private and shared open space in the interior of the proposed development.

An Administrative design review process is an option to an applicant for new multifamily structures if the structure would not exceed Design Review thresholds (see CAM 238). The purpose and intent is to provide flexibility in the application of development standards to better meet the intent of the Land Use Code as established by City policy. See SMC 23.41.012

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Two public comments were received during the official early design guidance comment period which ended October 2, 2008. The comments focused on design guidance available for the project and covered many points guided by an overall impression that bulk and scale and size of the buildings may be overreaching. Numerous development standards were discussed including setbacks, open space, access to the site, number of proposed units and amount of parking. The other comment was a request to provide more than the code required parking due to the shortage of street parking in the Alki area. Requests for quality materials were included as pertinent comments.

DISCUSSION

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, DPD has provided the siting and design guidance described below and identified by letter and number those siting and design guidelines found in the City of Seattle's "*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings*" of highest priority to this project.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics

The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

The project should make an effort to find the best fit for residential siting on this irregular shaped lot. The designer should respond to solar access, views and using the alleys to create creative solutions.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

Entries to individual units should be welcoming and recognizable.

A-10 Corner Lots

Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

This site and building has two corners. The corner of the north alley and 63rd Avenue should be the highest priority corner while the corner of the two alleys should be the secondary corner. 63rd is the higher priority street while the north alley should be second in priority façade design and design as the buildings meet the right of way.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less-intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

The building should be compatible with the anticipated development of the nearby sites.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency

Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept.

Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its façade walls.

A strong and clearly articulated concept should inform the design on this site.

C-3 Human Scale

The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.

A good human scale is important at this site as the urban fabric becomes more residential in nature away from Alki Avenue. Buildings should have a “friendly” relationship to the street and alleys.

E. Landscaping

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site

Landscaping including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

A broad definition of landscaping and a striving attention to landscape details should create an interesting and lively outdoor environment.

Departures are contemplated for these design alternatives. Possible departures may be structure depth and building setbacks, and/ or open space quantity, size and location. Vehicle access is located mostly on the north south running alley. The landscaped street edge on 63rd and along the east west alley creates a very attractive foreground for the townhouse units. The pedestrian courtyard looks like it could be a very desirable amenity for the development.

MASTER USE PERMIT

The applicant applied for the Master Use Permit February 4, 2009.

DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION

Departure from Development Standards:

The applicant has requested departures from the Land Use Code development standards. They are the following:

#	Development Standard	Requirement	Proposed	Departure Amount	Related priority guideline
1	SMC 23.45.011 A Structure depth.	65% of lot depth or approx. 78 feet.	85% of lot depth, approx. 93 feet.	Approx 42 feet.	A-1, A-3, A-10, C-2, C-3
2	SMC 23.45.014 C Side Setback.	L3 zone side setback is average 12 feet and minimum 7 feet.	North: 8' Average. 6' min. South: 11' Average and minimum is 6'.	North: 4 feet for the average. 1 foot for the minimum South: 12 average and 1 minimum.	A-1, B-1, C-2
3	SMC 23.45.014 F1a. Projection into a required setback.	Maximum 18 inch projection.	One narrow connecting architectural feature spanning the 7 foot opening at the upper level.	Approx 7 linear feet at upper level.	A-1, B-1, C-2
4	SMC 23.45.016 A3a1 Quantity of open space.	Average 300 and minimum of 200 sf of open space at ground level.	Average is 177 and minimum varies by unit.	Variable by unit.	A-1, B-1, C-2
5	SMC 23.45.016 B1c1 Development standards of open space.	Minimum area and dimension open space.	Varies by unit.	Variable by unit.	A-1, B-1, C-2
6	SMC 23.45.016 C1 Development standards of open space.	Open Space relationship to grade.	Direct access varies by unit.	Variable by unit.	A-1, B-1, C-2

Architect Presentation

The Architect and owner met with the planner to discuss the proposal. The Architect described the site context and project goals. The group discussed the neighboring buildings and window placement, site constraints and necessity for locating parking on site. The group also discussed trash and recycling locations and landscaping and open space configurations and options were reviewed.

Public Comment:

No public comments were received during the official Master Use Permit comment period which ended March 22, 2009.

ANALYSIS AND DECISION – ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW

The Director of DPD has reviewed the design and finds that it is consistent with the City of Seattle Design Review *Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings*.

This infill project is striving to create a high quality living space with three buildings organized around a central courtyard. The units are configured to present a highly modulated and multi-faceted building cluster. All vehicle entries are proposed off of the allies. Two units which face onto 63rd street are accessed by pedestrian walkways. Exterior architectural elements include protected entry ways, decks, large windows, interesting detailing and color. Planting is proposed to be full and varied.

The first departure is partially a result of the trapezoid shape of this site. The structure depth measurements are additive even though there is a courtyard interior to the site. Townhouse forms along the north property line push the measurement figures higher. The structure depth meets requirements along the south property line. This departure helps the project meet priority guidelines (noted in parenthesis). Responding to site characteristics (A-1); the project addressed the site shape with building forms that adjust to the site shape. Entrances visible from the street (A-3); the townhouse units have entrances which relate directly to the site. Corner lots (A-10); the 63rd Avenue façade is uninterrupted by vehicle access, parking is off of the allies.

Architectural concept (C-2) and consistency; the buildings are well-detailed urban townhouses with plenty of transparency, relation to the street or alley, but yet provide resident privacy and integrate into the Alki residential community. Also, when buildings are modulated and broken into townhouse units the human scale (C-3) of entry sequences is more visible in architectural features and site way-finding features. Allowing a departure from structure depth allows a more creative site plan with a good interior common courtyard and residential housing.

The second departure request seeks a partial departure from side yard development standards. The code specified side yards for this project are a minimum of seven (7) feet and an average of twelve (12) feet. The average of 8 feet 8 inches reflects the architectural series of breaks between buildings, modulation along facades and building corners that ease the built forms around the major site corners. The facades fall short of the average and minimum setbacks. The departure allows for a small and private interior courtyard, better modulated facades (C-2), height, bulk and scale variations (B-1), carved facades at various points, and a creative response to site characteristics (A-1).

The projection in to a required setback is a partial departure from a development standard to limit projections into setbacks. A seven foot gap in the proposed building massing is bridged with a narrow architectural feature at the upper level only. The proposal goal is to visually link the two townhouses to create an architectural rhythm along the entire north façade. The departure allows the designers to use architectural elements and materials to better meet guideline (C-2), architectural elements and materials, (B-1) bulk and scale and (A-1) responding to site characteristics.

The last departures are listed in the matrix as separate departure requests. However, they work as a unified departure request to help the project meet townhouse definitions, provide curb and alleyway landscaping, entry landscaping, creative massing, creative site planning, and personal private open space. Priority guidelines are better met with these departures; landscaping (E-2), site characteristics (A-1), and human scale (C-3).

After considering the proposed design and the project context, hearing public comment, and reconsidering the previously stated design priorities, DPD feels that separately, and as a whole, the departures requested help the project better meet the priority guidelines and additionally that all of the guidance the architect received has been successfully addressed. After examining the site, the neighborhood context, proposed architectural massing and facades, open space, and materials the Department supports the departures and recommends **approval** of the design.

Additional Information regarding any future changes to the design and compliance with approved plans:

1. Any proposed changes to the exterior of the building or the site or must be submitted to DPD for review and approval by the Land Use Planner (Holly Godard 206-615-1254). Any proposed changes to the improvements in the public right-of-way must be submitted to DPD and SDOT for review and for final approval by SDOT.
2. Compliance with all images and text on the MUP drawings, design review meeting guidelines and approved design features and elements (including exterior materials, landscaping and ROW improvements) shall be verified by the DPD planner assigned to this project (Holly Godard 206-615-1254), or by the Design Review Manager. An appointment with the assigned Land Use Planner must be made at least three working days in advance of field inspection. The Land Use Planner will determine whether submission of revised plans is required to ensure that compliance has been achieved.
3. Embed all of these conditions in the cover sheet for the MUP permit and for all subsequent permits including updated MUP plans, and all building permit drawings and embed the colored MUP recommendation drawings in the building permit plan sets.
4. Contact the planner Holly J. Godard (615-1254) three days in advance of the Preconstruction meeting to schedule the time and place of the meeting to discuss adherence to the project design review requirements as demonstrated on the official plans on file with DPD.

Conditions – Administrative Design Review

None.

Signature: (signature on file)
Holly J. Godard, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: May 14, 2009

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